Of critical estimates of Robert Browning

had perhaps enough, and we have certainly had a superfluity of attempts to interrest his more cryptic utterances. We may port be unintelligible to people of good parts. not clear even to himself. From Homer to Million there are no real exceptions to this If to us Eschylus seem at times obure, this is due mainly to the corruption of his text, and we may be sure that his tragedies would never have been placed upon the stage had not his diction been lucid to the mass of the Athenians. The difficulties encountered in reading Dante should be attributed. first to his diction being exceedingly archaic, the Divine Comedy having been the first considerable composition in the Italian tongue; and, secondly, to the fact that to understand the innumerable historical, biographical, theological, and metaphysical allusions requires an intimate acquaintance with the philosophy of the schoolmen and with political and social life in thirteenth century Italy, that very few readers possess, or might even deem it worth while to acquire. For Browning's obscurity, on the other hand, there is absolutely no excuse, and he must have been himself aware that only those poems of his which are comprehended at a glance by intelligent persons have any chance of life. It is only among the devotees of the Browning cult, who are said to be especially numerous in Chicago, that omne ignolum pro magnifico is

supposed to be an axiom in criticism. But, while we know all we need to know about Browning, the poet, we knew, up to the time of his death, singularly little about the man, even less, indeed, than we know about Tennyson or Swinburne, and it cannot be said that either of their personalities is very sharply defined. We have reason, therefore, to welcome the bicgraphy compiled by Mrs. BUTHER-LAND ORB under the title of Life and Letters of Robert Browning (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.). For the epistolary and reminiscent materials embodied in these two volumes, the compiler is mainly indebted to Robert Browning's sister, whose memory is indeed the only extant record of her brother's boyhood and youth. The task which Mrs. Orr undertook has been performed with modesty and industry, and her work will undoubtedly remain the principal authority with relationsto the poet's life. In the present notice we shall not attempt to follow Browning's long career from 1812 to 1889. but, after a glance at his early environment. and what may be termed his inherited outfit, we shall confine ourselves to an account of his romantic and interesting married life. It was, undoubtedly, an ideal union, that of Miss Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning. Beldom has there been more perfect intellectual fellowship and spiritual sympathy. There could be, indeed, no greater mistake than to imagine that a sharp divergence in respect to intellect and temperament is essential to a happy marriage. One difference. indeed, eannot be too strongly accented. It is indispensable that the wife should be intensely feminine and that the man should be veritably manlike. Let, however, this difference of sex be emphasized, and, the more alike they are in other things, the better for their harmony and happiness.

I. Mrs. Orr has done well to devote two chapters to a discussion of Browning's immediate progenitors, their social circumstances and personal experiences, for the reason that a maliclous rumor was at one time current ascribing to the poet an infusion of negro blood. A summary of the facts will show how little ground there was for the calumny. There was also another notion, which, though far from derogatory, proves to have been equally unfounded. that Browning had Jewish blood in his veins. The latter belief received some count nance from certain accidents of the post's life, as, for instance, from his known interest in the Hebrew language and literature, and from his friendship for various members of the Jewish community in London. Owing to these very sympathies he would have been the last person to disavow kinship with the race of israel had it actually existed. As a matter of fact the poet sprang, on the father's side, from an obscure or decayed branch of an Auglo-Saxon stock, rooted at an early period in the south and, apparently also, the southwest of England. The cradle of Browning's immediate family was Woodyates, in the parish of Tentridge, on the Wiltshire confines of Dorsetshire. There his ancestors of the third an i but independent, social position. Browning himself neither claimed nor dis claimed the more exalted genealogical past which had presented itself as a certainty to some older members of his family. He preserved, indeed, the old framed coat of arms handed down to him from his grandfather, and used, without misglving, a signet ring engraved from it. But so long as he was young. Browning had no reason to think about his ances tors; and when he was old he had no reason to care about them. Under any view of the case. he knew himself to be the most important fact in his family history, and once, when writing to a friend who had questioned him about his descent he quoted the familiar lines:

## Rol no suis, ni Prince aussi,

The first member of Browning's family with regard to whom the biographer has been able to obtain much information was his paternal grandfather, also named Robert, who obtaind. through Lord Shaftesbury's influence. clerkship in the Bank of England, and entered on it, when barely 20, in 1769. He served fifty years and rose to the position of principal cl the Bank Stock Office, then an important one, which brought him into contact with the leading financiers of the day He seems to have heen an able, energetic, and wholesome man, an Englishman of the provincial type, whose literary tastes were limited the Bible and "Tom Jones." both of which he is said to have read through once a year. He possessed a handsome person, and probably a vigorous constitution. lince, although frequently tormented by gout, he lived to the age of St. In 1778 he married Margaret, the daughter of a Mr. Tittle by hi marriage with a Miss Seymour. The young lady had been born in the West Indias, and had inherited property there. They had three children, the eldest of whom, Robort, was the poet's father. The creole mother died when her boy Robert was only 7 years old. and sed out of his memory in all but an indistinot impression of his having seen her lying in her comn. Five years later the widower married a Miss Smith, who gave him a large family. This second marriage of Mr. Brown ing's was an untoward event in the life of the poet's father. It gave the latter two stepparents instead of one. There could have been in any case but little sympatur between hi father and himself, but there was a more potent cause for the systematic unkindness under which the lad grew up. Mr. Browning fell greatly under the influence of his second wife. and this influence was made by her to sub-serve the interests of a more than natural isalousy of her predecessor. A significant performance was her banishing the first wife's portrait to a garret, on the plea that her band did not need two wives. The fact that her stepson had a little income of his own. derived from his mother's brother, seems to have only heightened her ill will, and when he was old enough to go to the university. and offered to do so at his own cost. she induced his father to forbid it, because, as she urged, they could not afford to send their other sons to college. An earlier ambition of his was to become an artist; but when he howed his first completed picture to his father the latter turned away and refused to look at it. Robert gave himself the flaishing stroke, in the parental eyes, by throwing up a lucrative employment, which he had held for a

For this unpractical conduct he was made to pay, when he came of age, by the compulsory reimbursement of all the excenses which his father had incurred for him. and also by the loss of his mother's fortune, which had not been settled upon her. It was probably in despair of doing anything better that soon after, in his twenty-second year, he also became a clerk in the Bank of England. He married and settled in that most presale of London suburbs, Camberwell, in 1811. There his son, the poet, and his daughter were born. respectively, in 1812 and 1914. He became a widower in 1849; and when, four years later. he had completed his term of service at the bank, he went with his daughter to Paris, where they realded until his death in 1856.

It was Dr. Furnivall who originated the

theory that Mr. Browning's grandmother. Miss Tittle, was more than a creole in the strict sense of the term (a person born of white parents in the West Indies), and that an unmistakable dash of negro blood passed from her to her son and grandson. In favor of this hypothesis, it was asserted that the poet's father was so dark in early life that a nephew who saw him in Paris in 1837 mistook him for an Italian. As a matter of fact he neither had, nor could have had, a nephew; and he was not out of England at the time specified. It is also said that when the poet's father was residing on his mother's sugar plantation at St. Kitt's his appearance was held to justify his being placed in church among the colored members of the congregation. That this story has no foundation Mrs. Orr has been assured in the strongest terms by a gentleman whose authority in all matters connected with the Browning family Dr. Furnivall has otherwise accepted as conclusive. If the proofs of a negro strain are to be looked for in the coloring of the eyes hair, and skin, they were conspicuously absent in the poet's father and his two children. The former had light blue eyes, and, according to those who know him best, a clear, ruddy complexion. His appearance, indeed, induced strangers passing him in the Paris streets to remark. "Voild un anglais." The absolute white less of his daughter's skin was, it is true, modified in her brother, the post, by a sailow tinge sufficiently explained by frequent disturbances of the liver. but it never affected the clearness of his large bine-gray eyes; and his hair, which grew dark as he approached manhood, though it never became black, is spoken of by those who remembered nim in childhood and youth as goldon. We may add, finally, that the following piece of evidence seems almost conclusive: The portrait of the first Mrs. Browning, which gave so much umbrage to her husband's second wife. was afterward to hang for many years in her grandson's dining room. It represents a stately woman with an unmistakably fair skin, and if the face betrays any indication of possible dark blood it is imperceptible to the general observer, and is, in Mrs. Orr's opinion, of too slight and fugitive a nature to justify discussion. As to the Italian characteristics which were sometimes thought to be discernible in the nost's face. there are recalled by the biographer in order to introduce a curious fact which, though it has no bearing on the main lines of his descent. may have held collateral possibilities. His mother's name. Wiedemann, appears in a contracted form as that of one of the oldest German families naturalized in Venice. It became united by marriage with the Rezzonicos, and. by an interesting coincidence, the last of these who occupied the palace now owned by Mr. Barrett Browning was a Widman-Rezzonico.

The poet's father did not like bank work, and

he did not rise so high nor draw so large a sal-

ary as the poet's grandlather. Still, the emotu ments of his position were larger than they have since become, and, eked out with his rmall private means, they enabled him to gratify his own scholarly and artistic tastes and to give his children the benefit of a very liberal education. Much that was to flash out as genius in the post existed as talent in the father, and their moral natures, on the whole, were similar, though they had points of contrast also. The most salient intellectual characteristic of the poet's father was his passion for reading. He not only read, but he remembered. As a schoolboy he knew by heart the first book of the Iliad and all the odes of Horace, and it shows how deeply the classical part of his training had entered into him that he was wont in later life to soothe his little boy to sleep by humming to him an ode o' Anacieon. Even more remarkable than his delight in reading was the manner in which he read. It was his habit, when he had bought a book, to have some pages of blank paper bound into it. These he would fill with notes, chronological tables, or such other interest or assist the mastery of its contents. The elder Browning had, moreover, an extraordinary power of versifying, and he taught his son, from babyhood, the words he wished him to remember by joining them to a grotesque rhyme; the child learned all his Latin declensions in this way. His love of art had been proved by his desire to adopt it as a profession; his gift for it was demonstrated by the life and power of the sketches. often caricatures, which fell from his pen or pencil as easily as written words. In all his faculties and attainments, as well as in his pleasures and appreciations, he showed the simplicity and genuineness of a child. He'repeatedly exhibited a more than childlike indifference to pecuniary advantages, and he was singularly indifferent to creature comforts. His daughter was convinced that if, on any occasion, she had said to him. "There will be no dinner to-day." he would only have looked up from his book to reply: "All right, my dear, it is of no consequener." He would never take the trouble of specifying what he would have to eat, but a hundred times that trouble would not have deterred him from a kindly act. We may add that the poet's father enjoyed splendid physical health. His early love of reading had not precluded a wholesome enjoyment of athletic sports, and he was, as a boy, the fastest runner in his school. Like his fatter, he died at the age of 84, but, unlike him, he had never been ill; a French friend exclaimed when all was over," Il n'a jamais die rieux." So unclouded were his faculties up to the last moment that he could watch himself die and speculate on the nature of the change which was before him. "What do you think death is Robert?" he said to his son. Is it a fainting or is it a pang?" Astonished at his seconity, the attendant physician turned to his daughter and whispered: "Does this gentleman know that he is dying ?" daughter answered in a voice which the father could hear, "He knows it;" and the old man said, with a quiet smile, "Death is no enemy in my eyes." His last words were spoken to his son Robert, who was fanning him: "I fear I am wearying you, dear."

Mrs. Orr has comparatively little to tell us about the poe:'s mother. Carlyle spoke of her as a "true type of a Scottish gentlewoand Mr. Kenyon declared that such as she had no need to go to Leaven, because they made it wherever they were. Her character was all summed up in her son's words, spoken with a tremulous emotion which often accompanied his allusions to those whom he had loved and lost: "She was a divine woman." She was Septch on the maternal side, and her kindly, gentle, but distinctly evangelical Christianity should doubtless be attributed to that source. Her father, William Weidemann, a ship owner, was a Hamburg merchant, settled in Dundes, and has been de-cribed by the poet as an accomplished draughtsman and musician. She, herself, had nothing of the artist about her, though we hear of her sometimes playing the plane: with her goodomewhat matter-of-fact. There is no doubt. however, that the poet's love of music was transmitted to bim, through her. from her father, and Mrs. Orr is inclined to make his Scottish-German descent accountable for the metaphysical quality early apparent in the poet's mind, but of which his tather had given

or, at all events, his nervous 'constitution. She was a delicate woman, very anæmic during her later years, and a martyr to neuralgia, which was, perhaps, symptom of her bloodless condition. The acute aliment reproduced itself in her daughter in spie of an otherwise vigorous constitution. In her son, the poet, the inheritance of suffering was not less indisputable although more difficult to trace. Most of those who knew him have been wont to speak of him as a brilliantly healthy man. It is true that he was healthy, and even strong in many capital respects. Until past the age of 70 he could take long walks without fatigue, and only within the latest months of his life did his letters suggest a failure of physical brain power. His consciousness of health was vivid, so long as he was well and he possessed considerable power of resuperation. Still the fact remains that the poet died of no acute disease, more than seven years younger than his father, having long carried with him external marks of age, from which his father had been exempt. He was constantly troubled by imperfect action of the liver, and until toward the age of forty he suffered from attacks of sore throat. During the last twenty years he rarely spent a winter without a suffocating cough. Within the last five years of his life asthmatic symptoms revealed themselves, and when he sank under what was perhaps his first real attack of bronchitis, it was not because the attack was particularly severe, but because the heart was exhausted. The analogy between his physical condition and that of his mother might be carried further by referring to his pallor, and the slow and not strong pulse which always characterized him. He had, however, the keen pleasures as wel as the pains of a highly nervous temperament he knew its quick response to every congenia stimulus of physical atmosphere and of human contact. His temperament heightened the enjoyment of his physical powers, and also led him, in his later years, to overdraw upon them. The exciting gayetr which, to the last, be carried into every social gathering, was often primarily the result of a moral and physcal effort, which his temperament prompted, but his strength could not always justify. Na ture avenged herself in recurrent periods of exhaustion long before the closing stage set in.

H. One word as to Browning's education, whose

most effective agency we must recognize in his father's many-sided culture and the resultant ntellectual atmosphere in which the boy grow up. He was, it seems, a handsome, vigorous fearless child, and soon developed an unresting activity and a flery temper. His mother could only keep him quiet, when once he had emerged from infancy, by telling him storiesdoubtiess Bible stories-while holding him on her knee. His energies were, of course de structive until they had found their proper outlet. It has often been told how he extemporized verse aloud while walking round and round a dining-room table, supporting himself by his hands, when he was still so small that his head was scarcely above it. At an unusually early ace, so early that we are justified in presuming that his parents' object was to get rid of his turbulent activity for a few hours every day, he was sent to a dame's chool: but after a few years he entered a boarding school, intended exclusively for boys, and kept by the Rev. Thomas Ready. There is no reason to suppose that the mental training at this establishment was more shallow or more mechanical than that of most other schools of the period; but the abilities o Robert Browning inspired him with a certain contempt for it, as also for the average choolboy intelligence, to which it was adapted. It must be for this reason that, as be himsel declared, he never galned a prize; and very likely his failure to make many friends at chool might be explained in the same way. It is probable that he was learning much more at home in his holidays than he learned a school. His father's house was crammed with books, and the boy Robert read omnivorously. When we consider how little of a suphula Browning was to be, it is surprising to learn that one of the books he loved best and earliest was "Quarles's Emblemes," which his father possessed in a seventeenth century edition. In general it may be said that Browning's home reading was at once largely literary and decidedly historical; it was in this direction that the paternal influence was revealed. It may interest his admirers to mention some of the authors which were favorites of Browning's in his youth. He pored, it seems, with sepecial delight over the first edition of Milton's works, bought for him by his her: over a treatise on only twenty years after the introduction of printing; over the original pamphiet, "Killing No Murder" (1559), which Carlyle bor-rowed for his "Life of Cromwell," and over an equally early copy of Mandeville's "Bees. Among more modern publications familiar to Browning from his early youth are men tioned "Walpole's Letters," the "Letters of Junius." and the works of Voltaire. Of course. the aucient poets would play their part in the mental culture superintended by Robert Browning's father. The Latin masters of epic and lyric verse and the Greek dramatists came to him in due time, though his especial deligh in the Greek language-a delight attested by his translations-only developed itself inter But his loving and life-long familiarity with the Elizabethan school, and, indeed, with the whole range of English poetry, points to a more constant study of his nation's literature. In his earliest poetlo days Byron was his chief master, but subsequently Shelley's influence became, and long remained, predominant. An outcome of his admiration for Byron was a collection o short poems, to which he gave the title of "Incondita." only 12. These poems, however, were by no means Browning's first, for he bad composed verses long before he could write. There is, perhaps, no reason to regret the loss of these earlier poems, particularly as Mr. Fox, who had read them, afterward declared that their fau't lay in the direction of too great splendor of language and too little wealth of thought. Mrs. Orr suggests that in them one may have heard the child Sordello singing against the lark.

Browning's first love was a Miss Flower; one is not unprepared to hear that she was nine years his senior, and that her own affections were apparently engaged elsewhere. Browning's tenderness, bowever, for this young lady had so deep a root that never, even n his latest years, could be mention her name with indifference. If any woman inspired Pauline." it was unquestionably she. After leaving school Browning studied for two years with a French tutor, who imparted to him a good knowledge of the French language and literature. In his eighteenth year he entered University College, London, but his attendance there was brief. It was at this time that he decided to make the writing of poetry his profession. His father seems to have sympathized with his purpose, although at one time be had desired his boy to qualify himself or the bar. A position in the Bank of England, such as he himself was occupying, he considered unworthy of his son's powers. Before passing to Browning's introduction to Miss Barrett, which occurred in 1844, when he was 32 years old, we will merely note that in the mean time the poet had published, besides minor peems. "Pauline." "Paracelsus." "Strafford" (which was acted by Macready and Miss Helen Faucit, but which had to be withdrawn after the fifth performance), "Sor-dello," "Pippa Passes." "Belles and Pomegranates," and "A Blot in the 'Soutcheon which was written for Macroady and accepted by him, but, having been produced in a mutilated form, could not be termed successful. Some forty yours later Browning declared. in a letter to Miss Faucit (then Lady Martin), that her perfect behavior as a woman and her admirable playing as an astress had been to him the no evidence. In one other point Mrs. Browning must have influenced her son's life and destiny: namely, in his physical health. some of the Dramatic Lyrics had been pub-

lished during 1844 in Hood's Magazine, and that "Pled Piper of Hamelin" had been written two rears earlier.

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It seems that during his intercourse with the

Browning family Mr. Kenyon had often spoken of his invalid cousin. Elizabeth Barrett (prop-

erly Elizabeth Barrett Moulton-Barrett), and had given them copies of her works. From a ojourn in Italy the poet returned to England in 1844 and saw a volume containing " Lad Geraldine's Courtship," which had appeared during his absence. On hearing him declarhis admiration of it. Mr. Kenyon begged him to write to Miss Barrett and himself tell her how the poem had impressed him. "for." he added. "my cousin is a great invalid and sees no one, but great souls jump at sym pathy." Browning did write, and a few months. probably, after the correspondence had been established, begged to be allowed to visit her. She at first refused on the score of her delicate health and habitual seclusion, emphasizing the refusal with words of touching humility and resignation. "There is nothing," she wrote, "to see in me, nothing to hear in me, I am a wood fit only for the ground and darkness." But her objections were overcome, and their first interview sealed Browning's fate. It is not of course, to be imagined that in he course of his thirty-two years Browning had never met with women who had to some extent attracted him. But such feelings as others had elicited were but the acant-courier of love. She, whom he now saw for the first time, had long been to him one of the greatest of living poets. She was also learned, as wo men seldom were in those days, or, for that matter, are in ours. It must have been apparent on the most fugitive contact that her motional nature was as exquisite in generos ity and sympathy as her mind was exceptional. She looked much younger than her age. which was six years beyond Browning's and her face was filled with beauty by the large, expressive eyes. The long imprisoned love within her must unconsciously have leaned to meet his own. It was only natural that he should swiftly grow into a determination to devote his life to her. His offer of marriage was made under a sudden overmasterng impulse, and it was persistently repeated until be obtained a conditional assent. No sane man in Browning's position—and Browning was certainly as same as any man can be who is in love-could have been ignorant of the responsibilities he was incurring. He knew that Miss Barrett received him. lying down, and that his very ignorance of her. condition left him with out assurance that she would ever be able to stand. Miss Barrett, indeed, had made her acceptance of Mr. Browning's proposal contin-gent on her improving in health, nor will it surprise those who have studied the physiology of the affections to learn that under the influence of her new happiness she did gain some degree of strength. They saw each other three times a week; they exchanged letters constantly, and a very deep and perfect understanding soon established itself between them. In this way the months slipped by until the summer of 1846 was drawing to its old and Miss Barrett's doctor then announced that her only chappe of comparative recovery lay in spending the coming winter in the South. Her father refused to sanction such a journey, not believing, probably, that she would benefit by the proposed change. There remained to her only one alternative—to break with the old home and travel southward as Browning's wife. When she had definitely made up her mind to this course she took a proparatory step which must have startled those about her; she drove to Regent's Park, and, when there, stepped out of the carriage

ment-but she can well remember hearing that vhen, after so long an interval. Miss Barrett felt earth under her feet and air about her, the sensation was bewildering and strange. Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning wer narried in strict privacy on Sept. 12, 1846, at St. Paneras Church. Far from having obtained Mr. Barrett's sanction to their marriage, the engaged pair had not even invoked it. No doubt the clandestine character thus forced upon the union was repugnant to Browning's pride, but it seems to have been dictated by the deepest filial affection upon the part of his wife. She was determined to give herself to the man she loved. But she know that her father would never consent to her doing so, and she preferred marrying with-out his knowledge to acting in defiance of a prohibition he would never have revoked, and which would have weighed upon her all her life, like a portent of evil. She even kept the accret of her engagement from her infather, Mr. Kenyon, that they might not be involved in responsibility. When subsequently Mr. Kenyon spoke to her father about the marriage, then an accomplished fact, the latter relied: "I have no objection to the young man, but my daughter should have been thinking o another world:" and went on to express his conviction that Miss Barrett's state was hopeess. For some days after their marriage Mr. and Mrs. Browning returned to their old life. The only difference in their habits was that he did not see her; he recoiled from the hypocrisy of asking for her under her maiden name, and during this passive interval he bore a weight of anxiety and depression which placed it smong the most painful periods of his existence. In the late afternoon or evening of Sept. 19, 1846, Mrs. Browning, attended by her maid and her dog, stole away from her father's house. The family was at dinner, in which meal she was not in the habit of joining and there was no difficulty in her escaping but that created by the dog, which might be expected to bark its consciousness the unusual situation. She took him into her confidence. She said: "Oh, Flush, if you make a sound, I am lost." And Flush understood, as what good dog would not? and crept after his mistress in silence. Mrs. Orr does not remem-ber where her husband joined her, but we may take for granted that it was as near her home as possible. That night they took the boat for Havre on their way to Paris.

and on to the grass. Mrs. Orr does not know

how long she stood-probably only for a mo-

The clandestine marriage and elepement excited not only wrath in the Barrett family but consternation in that of Mr. Browning. Not only had the post committed a crime in the eyes of his wife's father, but, in the judgment of his own parents, he had been guilty of one of those arrors which are worse than erimes, A hundred times the possible advan-tages of marrying a Miss Barrett could never in their eyes, have counterbalanced the risk which Browning had incurred in wresting to himself the guardianship of a frail life which might perish in his hands, leaving him to be accused of having destroyed it. It was soon, however, to be apparent that mar-rings had not killed Miss Barrett, but had given her a new lease of existence. She railed suddenly and surprisingly in the sunshine of her new life, and remained for several years at the higher physical limit. Nevertheless, her aliments, resulting from an miury inflicted in youth on her spine, were too radical for permanent cure, as the weak voice and shrunken form never ceased to attest They eventually reappeared, though in slightly different conditions, and she gradually re-lapsed, during the winters at least, into some thing like the home-bound condition of her earlier days. It became impossible that she band's existence, which, therefore, had to be alternately suppressed and carried on without her. Yeta many-sided intellectual sympathy and a deep and ardent love preserved their union in rare beauty to the end.

Many interesting details of Browning's married life have been lost through the wholesale destruction of his letters to his father's family -a destruction which he carried out a few years before his death. His wife's part in the correspondence was preserved, but does not fill the gap, since for a long time it chiefly consisted of little personal outpourings enclosed in her husband's letters and supplementary to them. But she also wrote constantly to Miss Mitford, and from these letters Mrs. Orr has

found it possible to extract much material of blographical interest. Here, for instance, is a touching passage in a letter evidently written from Paris during the honsymoon; "He, as you say, has been everything for me-he loved me for reasons which had belped weary me of myself-loved me heart to heart persistently, in spite of my own willdrew me back to life and hope again when I had done with both. My life seems to have belonged to him and to no other, and I had no power to speak a word. Have faith in me, my dearest friend, until you knowhim. The intellect is so little in comparison to all the rest-to the womanly tenderness, the inexhaustible goodness, the high and noble aspiration of is not a flaw anywhere. I shut my eyes sometimes and fancy it all a dream of my guardian angel; only, if it had been a dream, the pain of some parts of it would have awakened me before now. It is not a dream." In another letter. written some months afterward, we seem to hear the married pair conversing: "Robert is a warm admirer of Balzac, and has read most all his books, but certainly he does not in a general way appreciate our French people quite with my warmth. He takes too high a standard, I tell him, and won't listen to a story for the story's sake-I can bear. you know, to be amused without a strong pull on my admiration. So we have great wars sometimes. I put up Dumas's flag, or Soulid's or Eugles Sue's (yet he was properly impressed by the 'Mystéres de Paris'), and carry it until my arms ache. The plays and vaudevilles he knows far more of than I do. and always maintains they are the happiest growth of the French school. Setting aside the masters, observe: Balzac and George Sand hold their honors. Then we read together, the other day. 'Rouge et Noir.' that powerful work of Stendhal's, and he observed that it

was exactly like Balzao in the raw-in the ma terial and undeveloped conception." We come next upon a glimpse of the Flor entine life of the married lovers. The letter is dated August, 1847: "Very hot certainly it has been, and is, yet there have been cool intermissions, and, as we have spacious and nire rooms, as Robert lets me sit all day in my white dressing gown without a single mascu lips criticism, and as we can step out of the window on a sort of balcony terrace, which is quite private, and swims over with moonlight in the evening, and, as we live upon water-melons and ice water and figs and all manner of fruit, we bear the heat with an angelic patience. • • We tried to make the monks of Vallombrosa let us stay with them for two months, but the abbot said or implied that Wilson and I stank in his nostrils, being women. (Wilson was the name of the maid.) So we were sent away at the end of five days. Such scenery, such a sea of hills looking alive among the clouds. Such fine woods, supernaturally silent, with the ground as black as ink. Ther were eagles there, too, and there was no road Robert went on horseback, and Wilson and were drawn on the sledge (i.e., an old hamper basket wine hamper, without a wheel) by two white bullocks up the precipitous moun tains. Think of my travelling in those wild places at 4 o'clock in the morning a little frightened, dreadfully tired, but in an ecestary of admiration. It was a sight to see befor one died and went away into another world." It is still from Florence that in July, 1848, she writes: "I am quite well and strong; after more than twenty months of marriage we are happier than ever. On March 9, 1819, Mrs. Browning gave her

husband a son. With the joy at his wife's deliverance from the dangers of such an event

came also his first great sorrow. 'His mother did not live to receive the news of her grandchild's birth. The ensuing extract is from letter written by Mrs. Browning in April of the same year: "This is the first packet of letters except one to Wimpole street, which I have written since my confinement. You will have heard how our joy turned suddenly into deep sorrow by the death of my husband's mother. An unsuspected disease terminated in a fatal way, and she lay in the insensibility precursive of the grave when the letter written with such gladness by my poor husband, and announcing the birth of his child, reached her address. 'It would have made her heart bound.' wrote her daughter to us. Poor tender heart-the last throb was too near. The next joy she felt was to be in beaven itself. My husband has been in the deepest anguish, and except for the considerateness of his sister, who wrote two letters of preparation. I am frightened to think what the result would have been to him. He has loved his mother as such pastremity of sorrow-never. \* \* It has been nful altogether, this drawle gether of life and death. Robert was too en raptured with my safety, and his little son and the sudden reaction was terrible." Writing some time afterward, from the Baths of Lucea, she telfs her correspondent that she had the greatest difficulty in persualing her husband to leave Florence for a month or two He who generally delights in travel had no mind for change or movement. I had to say and swear that baby and I couldn't bear th heat and that we must and would go away \*\*Ce que femme reut, homme reut, 'if the latter is at all amiable, or the former persevering. At last I gained the victory. \*\* Ever since my confinement I have been growing stronger and stronger; where it is to stop I can't tell really. I can de as much, or more, than at any point of my life since I arrived at woman's estate." The follow ing fragment refers apparently to the same period: "If he is vain of snything in the world it is of my improved health, and I say to him but you needn't talk so much to people of how your wife walked here with you, and there with you, as if a wife with a pair of feet was a miraele of nature."

In the summer of 1851 the Brownings went to England; and then, as on each succeeding visit paid to London with his wife, he commemorated his marriage in a manner all his own. He went to the church in which it had been solomnized, and kissed the paving stones in front of the door. It needed all this love to comfort Mrs. Browning in the estrangement of hor father, which was henceforth to be accepted as final. He had held no communiention with her since her marriage, and she knew that it was not forgiven: but she had cherished a hope that he would so far relent toward her as to kiss her child, even if he would not see her. Her prayer to this effect, however, remained unanswered.

The Brownings passed a part of the next winter (1852) in Paris, and we learn from a letter to Miss Mitford how they made the acquaintance of George Sand. "We have at last sent our letter (Mazzini's) to George Sand accompanied with a little note signed by both of us, although written by me, as seemed right, being the woman. We half despaired in doing this, for it was most difficult, it appears, to get at her, she having taken yows against seeing strangers in consequence of va lous annoyances and persecution in and out of print, which it is the mere instinct of a woman to avoid. I can understand it perfectly. People said 'she will never see you; you have no chance I am afraid;' but we determined to try. At last I pricked Robert up to the leap-for he was really inclined to sit in his chair and be proud a little. 'No.' said I. 'you shan't be proud. and I won't be proud. and we will see her; I won't die, if I can help it, without seeing George Sand. So we gave our letter to a friend. Who was to give it to a friend of his, who was to place it in her hands. her abode being a mystery, and the name she used unknown." The next day Mrs. Browning received a note from Mme. Dudevant, asking her to come and see her on a Sunday, which would be her only day at home. Here follows the account of the interview: "I have seen G. S. She received us in a room with a bed in it, the only room she has to occupy. I suppose, during her short stay in Paris. She received us very co.dially, with her hand held out, watch I in the emotion of the moment stooped and klass i. upon which she exclaimed: 'Mais non, is ne reuz pas, and kissed me. I do not think she is a great deal tailer than I am-yes.

taller, but not a great deal—and a little over alout for that height. The upper part of the face is fine, the forehead, eyebrows and eyes-dark, g'owing eyes as they should be: the lower part, not so good. The beautful teeth project a little, flashing out a smile from the large character stic mouth, and the chin recedes. It never could have been a beautiful face, Robert and I agree, but noble and expressive it has been, and is. The complexion is olive, quite without color, the bair, black and glossy, divided with evident care and twisted back into a knot behind the head, and she wors no covering to it. She was dressed in a sort of gray woollen gown, with the jacket of the same material, the gown featene lup to every hour. Temper, spirits, manners-there | the throat with a small linen collerett, and plain white muslin sleeves buttoned around the wrists. The hands offered to me were small and well shaped. Her manners were quite as simple as her costume. I never saw a simple woman. Not a shade of affectation or conselousness even-not a suffusion of coquetry not a ciga: ette to be seen. Two or three men were sitting with her, and I observed the profound respect with which they I stened to every word she said. She spoke rapidly, with alow, unemphatic voice. Repose of manner is much more her characteristic than animation is-only, under all the quietness, and perhaps by means of it, you are aware of an intense, burning soul. She ki-sed me again when we went awa;."

From subsequent experience Mrs. Browning

eigarette appeared (though not in Mrs. Browning's presence), and other less decorous features of George Sand's enfourage revealed themselves. Thus we read under date of April 7. 1852: "George Sand we came to know a great deal more of. I think Robert saw her six times. Once he met hernear the Tulleries, offered her his arm, and walked with her the whole length of the gardens. She was not, on that occasion, looking as well as usual, being a little too much endimanchee, interrestrial lavenders and super-celestial bines: in fact, not dressed with the remarkable taste which he has seen in her at other times. Her usual costume is both pretty and quiet and the fashionable waistcont and jacket make the only approach to masculine wearings to be observed in her. She has," continues Mrs. Browning, "great nicety and refinement in her personal ways, I think-and the cigarette is really a feminine weapon if properly understood. Ab. but I did not see her smoke. I was unfortunate. I could only go with Robert three times to her house, and once she was out. He was really very good and kind to let me go at all after he found the sort of society rampant around her. He did not like it, but being the prince of husbands, he was lenient to my desires and yielded the point. She seems to live in the abomination of desolation, as far as regards society-crowds of ill-bred men who adore her à genouz bas betwixt a puff of smoke and an ejection of saliva-society of the ragged red, diluted with the low theatrical. She always so different, so apart, so alone in her melancholy disdain. I was deeply interested in that poor woman. I felt a profound compassion for her. I did not mind much even the Greek, in Greek costume, who tutoyid her and kissed her. I believe, so Robert says or the other vulgar man of the theatre, who went down on his knees and called her 'sublime,' 'Caprice d'amitie,' said she, with her quiet gentle scorn. A noble woman under the mud, be certain. I would kneel down to her, too. if she would leave it all, or throw it off, and be herself as God made her. But she would not care for me to kneelshe does not care for me. Perhaps she does not care much for anybody by this time, who knows? We both tried hard to please her, and she told a friend of ours that she 'liked us,' only

we always felt that we couldn't penetrate—couldn't really touch her—it was all in vain." We must bring our extracts from this correspondence to a close, but we would not overlook a remark made by Browning about his wife's writings, to an old friend, Mme. du Quaire. He had been it seems, declaiming passages from his wife's poetry, and when Mme. du Quaire hal said that she much preferred his poetry to hers, he made this characteristic answer: "You are wrong-quite wrong -she has cenius: I am only a painstaking fellow. Can't you imagine a clever sort of angel, who plots and plans and tries to build up something-who wants to make you see it as he sees it—shows you one point of view, carries you off to another, hammering into your head the thing he wants you to understand; and while this bother is going on, God Almighty turns you off a little star-that is the sionate natures only can love, and I difference between us. The true creative never saw a man so bowed down in the expower is hers, not mine."

> The ideal union of the Brownings was not to be of very long duration. It lasted not quite fifteen years. Mrs. Browning died in Florence on June 29, 1861. Those who were with her husband at the time of his affiliation had reason to deny, what has been so often affirmed. that great griefs are necessarily silent. They were wont to speak of this period as an "apogalyptic month." so deeply roetic were the ravings which alternated with the simple human cry of the desolate human heart, "I want her. I want her." In a letter written by Browning some months afterward, there is an affecting description of the deathbed scene. With this extract we must leave of Mrs. Orr's interesting "The main comfort is that she sufbook: fered little pain, none beside that ordinarily attending the simple attacks of cold and cough she was subject to-had no presentiment of the result whatever, and consequently was spared the misery of knowing that she was about to leave us; she was smiringly assuring me that she was 'better.' 'quite comfortable-if I would but come to bed.' to within a few minutes of the last. We talked over plans for the summer and next year, I soot the servants away and her maid to bed. so little reason for disquietude did there seem. Through the night she slept heavily and brokenly, that was the bad sign, but then she would sit up. take her medicine, say unrepeatable things to me, and sleep again. At 6 clock there were symptoms that alarmed me. I called the maid and sent for the doctor. She smiled as 1 proposed to bathe her fest. Well. you are determined to make an exaggerated case of it. Then came what my heart will keen until I see her again and longer—the most perfect expression of her love to me within my whole knowledge of her. Always smilingly, happily, and with a face like a girls—and in a lew minutes she died in my arms: her head on my check. These incidents so sustain me that I tell them to her beloved ones as their right; there was no lingering nor acute pain, nor consciousness of separation; but God took her to Himself sa you would life a sleeping child from a dark uneasy bed to your arms.' she was 'better.' 'quite comfortable-if I

> > Blowing Up a Bear with Powder.

From the Baston Ex re s.

Arismus Harper of Pocono Moun' ain left. A.

E. Bruntage's store on Ekkinser's creek last triday a farmoon for his home. Her miles distant, so the sory ones. He had a two-rear-old helier behind the waxon and when he toot into the Westford woods, on the summit of the mountain, he hitched his team to a tree and trudged over to a swamp to pick a basket of greens. In a hort time Mr. Harper head the left behind the vice road he found a big she bear clawing at the helfer's neck. Before he could do anything the befer broke the rope and started to run, but the bear ripped her bag loose and went to devouring it.

Mr. Harper started to club the bear at once, and the enraged beast sprang at him. Each of the helfer was loaded on the was a flask of the pound at the heaf of weapon setter than a club, but in his secket there was a flask of the pound at the boar help of the departing of the mountain the lear was crassel from flusger, he made un his mind not to run the risk again of losing the words white the heaf or was all ablaze when Mr. The normal product the help of the departing of the normal product the woods. The hear was all ablaze when Mr. It is pited the nowder, there was all instantances flash along her boak, and the tear the long that resulting for such the woods. The hear was all ablaze when Mr. Harper got his last climps of her and same continued to rour unit she has been entered the woods. The hear was all ablaze when Mr. Harper got his last climps of her and same continued to rour unit she has been entered to have a same and the hear the single flustration of the department of the depart

THE TYPEWRITER'S RECOLLECTIONS She Met Many Strange Men, and Pinally Married One of Thm, Happily. She had been a typewrite, and now she was a I ride, seated in her own tokey home in the suburbs and surveying all he handsome ap pointments of the place with the proud ere of wifely ownership. She wastalking over her experiences while she was working for her living before a writing machne.

'For years," said she, "I we the best oper ator in a large office from which girls were sent out to take down at dictation whatever the customers of the firm wanted b have written I must have been to many hundreds of offices and stores, and studies, and houses, and Han one knows the risks, and temptations, and trials of a typewriter's life, I am he one." Her brown eyes widened and hen sparkled with amusement as her full ray lips were pursed up to begin another sentence. He

beauty of face and of form lent in added en

phasis to the thought that she mut have had

experiences" which many a dainer girl

would not have suffered or provoked. "I had a man chase me around and around a table one time," said she. 'He was nortly, dignified old man, the fater of family. I became so wise tha I can't and early scented the possibility of a disegreeable adventure, and was on my guard against it. This man was too dignified to de anything violent, but he had a look h his ere and a way of edging nearer and nearer t derived a slightly different impression. The where I sat, that I took fright and edged away from him as often as he mived his It was the funniest experience I eve had. We sat at a big table, but, nevertheless I went all the way along all its four sites will him nudging along teside me. I did ny work all right, but it was of no earthly use when was done, for his wits were senttered and he was so confused that he talked the veristing sense. The next day he came to the ofice and

was done, for his wits were senttered and he was so confused that he talked the verisinon, sense. The next day he came to the office and picked out a very old-maidish and price of face would sour a pail of milk. To her he succeeded in dictating what he wanted, which was at argument in a law case.

The only actual indignity that I suffered was when a young man pinched my check. He did it so deliberately and it was so unexpected that I did not know what to say or do. Or course. I stood right up and scrunched my notebook into a roll in my hand. Then I started to say that I should be obliged to return to my employer and report what had happened, but he was as much frightened as I. and, with his face just as red as a beony, he stood in front of me and prevented my moving a step. He made a full apology, and ening a step. He made a full apology, and ening a step. He made a full apology, and ening a step. He made a full apology, and ening a step. He made a full apology, and ening should occur again. He called in a cierr and gave him, but with such bestation and as black a look that he was protty woll rightened. Other girls had told me so many stories of men apologizing by offering them five ten dollar bills, that I half expected him orry that method, but he was too much of a genileman. I often took work at his dictation afterward, and he was as meck as pie every time. I noticed, though, that there was always acters in the room, and that the clork always is mained the whole time.

"You don't know what a pleasant thing it is for a girl to find a second man in the office to which she is sent to do work. I know that lot and lots of lawyers and business men make it a rule never to be left alone with a woman one minute in their business places. You may say that it is very embarrassing and humilating to think that this is done through ear that you are an adventuress and are leared to the evil dosigns that you may have, yet after a girl or woman has had a little experience she comes to be as much afraid of strange men at they

go about the down-town offices. The men did not know how to treat them at first I think. They did not reflect that the very fact that the young lady was in the business was a wooth that she was a young lady, and was to be treated as such. You see, it's this war: There are typewriting schools that promise to fit girls out in a few weeks we in three months or some such time. They don't do it and can't do it, as many a girl has found out. It really takes a year ottener than not, because while the machine is easy is master, the least part of it is to master it. After that nothing but hard work and long application will make a quick writer, and these girl is no good until she has got quite an education in spelling, in punctuation, and in legal forms, for lawyers are the main employer. Added to all this a girl has got to have wise general information, so as to know how to spell common proper names, geographical name and all the rest.

"I'm testing you all this so that you will understand that no frivolous or fast girl is going to go to all that trouble, and no such girls and to be found among typewriters, at least I have never known one or heard of one. But mes did not know that at first, and at that time adventures were more frequent. Within the last year or two I sedom gave a thought to the possibility of insult, and not a ripule of masult. The only nuisances were those men who wanded to have a social as well as a business according to the social as well as a business according to the social as well as a business according the social as well as a business according to the social as well as a business according to the social as well as a business according the social as well as a business according the social as well as

nossibility of insult and not a ripple of maculine misbehavior disturbed my experiences. The only nuisances were those men who wasted to have a social as well as a business are unaintance with us young ladies."

"How was that?"

"Why, they wanted to know if they could not take a drive, or go to the 'heatro, or discout with us. I suspect that is the way that the idle and mischlevous ones now take in finding out the characters of the girls that as sent to them. I was constantly meeting with that experience when I took work from the younger men. After a great deal of a heming and 'humphing,' I would be asked if I had seen Dixer. or Francis Wilson, or Mansfeld, and then out came the invitation to do so of to ride, or to go to Delmonico's. I aware made one reply: I always said that I near accepted such invitations except from callets in my home, and then only with permission from my parents."

"What then?"

"Why that settled it—except in one case. One great goose replied that if that was so be would feel honored if he might know my address, so that he could call and he entitled it ask me out. I never did another bit of trowwriting for him. Can you guess why? It was because he came to call on me that night, and from that night he could never bear to thist, was working for a living. He called twice a week for six months, and at least once a week for six months, and at least once a week for six months, and at least once a week for six months, and at least once a week for six months, and at least once a week for six months, and at least once a week for six months, and at least once a week for six months, and at least once a week for six months, and at least once a week for six months, and at least once a week for six months, and at least once a week for six months, and at least once a week for six months, and at least once a week for six months, and at least once a week for six months, and at least once a week for six months, and at least once a week for six months, and at least once a week for six months, and at least

DYING HUANACOS.

An Instinct that Makes them Seek a Common Resting Pince for their Bones, From Longman's Require.

From Longman's Recaims.

It is well known that at the southern strem ty of Patagonia the humanes have a dring place—a spot to which all the individual inhabiting the surrounding plains repair at the approach of death to deposit their bon-s. Darwin and Fitzrov first recorded his atrance instinct in their personal narrative and their observations have since been fully confirmed by others.

The best known of these dving or burish places is on the banks of the Santa fru and places is on the banks of the Santa fru and Gallegos rivers, whose the river vallers are covered with dense primeval thickers of bases and trees of atunied growth. There the ground and trees of atunied growth. There the ground is covered with bones of countiess dead generations.

short time on his mother's West Indian prop-

erty, in disguet at the system of slave labor.